



Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) Policy





1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy explains how the Housing Plus Group ('the Group') will meet the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements 'STAIRs'. The first part comes into effect from the 1st October 2026 and part two comes into effect from the 1st April 2027. STAIRs supports transparency, openness and accountability by enabling tenants and their designated representatives to access information about the management of social housing services.
- 1.2 The policy covers the proactive publication of information through a publication scheme, the handling of written information requests and the process for internal reviews and escalation to the Housing Ombudsman where applicable.

2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Group is committed to making relevant information available to tenants in a clear, accessible and timely way. We will take a proactive approach to publication and will generally make information available free of charge, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- 2.2 We will publish and disclose information where it is reasonable to do so. We will only withhold or redact information where this is reasonable, lawful and proportionate, having regard to data protection, freedom of information principles, confidentiality, commercial sensitivity, health and safety, safeguarding and other relevant legal obligations.

3.0 Policy Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to the Group, its employees (including temporary and interim), board and committee members, contractors, agents and any third party responsible for managing social housing services on our behalf. It applies to information relating to the management of our social housing function.
- 3.2 The policy is available to current tenants and their designated representatives. It does not apply to former or prospective tenants, unless required by the Housing Ombudsman Scheme or another applicable route. Requests for personal data will be handled under data protection law rather than STAIRs.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 STAIRs mean the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements.
- 4.2 RSH means the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 4.3 HOS means the Housing Ombudsman Service.

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- 4.4 Relevant information means information held by the Group that relates to the management of its social housing as defined by the RSH and detailed in 6.1 below.
- 4.5 Designated representative means a person authorised by a tenant to make a STAIRs request or review a request on their behalf.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Group meets its regulatory obligations. The Executive Management Team is responsible for maintaining oversight of implementation and resourcing to meet the requirements of STAIRs.
- 5.2 All employees must recognise potential STAIRs requests, provide information promptly when asked to do so, follow the disclosure log process and seek advice from the Data Protection Officer (DPO) where disclosure, redaction or refusal decisions are complex. The DPO will be responsible for overseeing the request and responding in accordance with this Policy.

6.0 Publication Scheme

- 6.1 From the 1st October 2026, the Group will maintain a publication scheme setting out the classes of information it routinely publishes or otherwise make available. This will include information about governance and decision making, finance and spending, housing stock management, performance, housing services and tenant liaison, lists and registers and relevant policies and strategies.
- 6.2 Information will be published on our website and kept under review so that it remains accurate, accessible and up to date. Where tenants need information in an alternative format, including large print, accessible electronic format, audio, Braille or another language, we will take reasonable steps to provide this free of charge.

7.0 Information Requests, Reviews and Complaints

- 7.1 From the 1st April 2027, current tenants and their designated representatives may make requests for relevant information. Requests may be made by letter, email, text message, website form, social media or other written channels where the requestor can be identified and a correspondence address is available. We will acknowledge requests promptly and normally within five working days.
- 7.2 We will respond to valid STAIRs requests within 30 calendar days of receipt, or within 30 calendar days of receiving clarification or identity verification



where this is needed. We may extend the response time only in exceptional circumstances and will explain the reason for doing so.

- 7.3 We may refuse a STAIRs request where it is reasonable, lawful and proportionate to do so. This may include:
- where the request is outside the scope of STAIRs;
 - the requester is not eligible to make the request;
 - the information is not held by the Group;
 - the request relates to personal data and should be handled under data protection legislation;
 - disclosure would adversely affect confidentiality, commercial sensitivity, legal privilege, health and safety, safeguarding or other legal obligations.
- 7.4 We may also refuse a request where locating, retrieving and extracting the information would exceed the applicable time limit, including where compliance would exceed 18 hours of staff time. Where possible, we will provide advice and assistance to help the requester clarify or narrow their request so that it may be considered within the limit. Where a request is refused, we will explain the reason for refusal, confirm whether any information can still be provided, and explain the requester's right to request an internal review as referred to in 7.5.
- 7.5 Tenants may ask for an internal review if they believe information has not been published, has been withheld or redacted without reasonable basis or if they are dissatisfied with the handling of a request. Reviews should usually be requested within three months and will normally be completed within 30 calendar days.
- 7.6 If the tenant remains dissatisfied after the internal review, they may contact the Housing Ombudsman where the matter falls within the STAIRs complaints scheme.

	Policy Control Sheet STAIRs Policy Policy reference number - 2026/023
Policy Author	Angelina Hicklin - Governance Manager Jo Webb - Legal Services Manager
Direct Lead	Chief Financial Officer
Version	1.0 – September 2026
Target audience	All those detailed in section 3.1 of this policy.
Consultation	Regional Directors Director of Business Intelligence and Change Director of Improving the Customer Experience Head of Risk and Assurance Head of People Development and Culture
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	N/A - No individuals or groups of people are disadvantaged by the adoption of this policy
Date of Data Privacy Impact Assessment	N/A - No personal data is processed as part is processed as part of implementing this policy.
Approving Body	Executive Management Team
Date of final approval	24 th September 2026
Implementation date	1 st October 2026
Monitoring arrangements	The Legal Services Manager will oversee monitoring arrangements.
Reporting	Service Performance and Customer Experience Committee as part of compliance with the Consumer Standards.
Review date	March 2029 with an initial review in February 2027 ahead of the Publication scheme from 1 st April 2027.
Expiry date	September 2029
Review cycle	Three-year review cycle
Policy category	Corporate
Associated policies and procedures	Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy Complaints Policy
Policy location	Workvivo Policy and Procedure SharePoint Pages Housing Plus Group website

Summary of changes table

Revision history			
Author	Summary of changes	Version	Authorised by & date
A.Hicklin & J.Webb	New Policy	1.0 - September 2026	Executive Management Team – 24/09/2026